

# TASN<sup>ews</sup>

Spring 2023, Vol. 19, No. 3

A Publication of the Texas Association for School Nutrition

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# 2022–2023 TASN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Darin Crawford  
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD

### **President-Elect**

Doug Massey  
Klein ISD

### **Vice President**

Lacy Willey  
Cleveland ISD

### **Immediate Past President**

Sharon Glosson  
North East ISD

### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Susan D'Amico  
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### **TASN Executive Director**

Karen Andrasi

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### **Education Chair**

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Mary Ellen Cote  
Key Impact Sales

### **Membership Chair**

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### **Organizational Affairs Chair**

Michael Francis  
Spring Branch ISD

### **Public Policy & Legislative Chair**

Maggie Mae Kennedy  
Spring Branch ISD

## AREA REPRESENTATIVES

### **Chair of Area Representatives**

Adam Whitten  
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### **Area 2 Representative**

Vicky Clark  
Santa Fe ISD

### **Area 5 Representative**

Victoria Ybarra  
Red Oak ISD

### **Area 6 Representative**

Norma Riojas  
Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD

### **Area 7 Representative**

Joy Peters  
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD

### **Area 10 Representative**

Veronica Villarreal  
East Central ISD

### **Area 12 Representative**

Tina Brooks  
Stratford ISD

# 2023-2024 TASN ELECTION



Meet Your New  
2023-2024 TASN  
Board Members!

8

## CERTIFICATION INFORMATION

# FAQ

26

## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 President's Greeting**  
by Darin Crawford, TASN President
- 3 Calendar**
- 4 Headquarters Highlights & Association News**  
by Karen Andrasi, TASN Executive Director
- 5 Vice President Greeting**  
by Lacy Willey, TASN Vice President
- 19 Local News**
- 22 Membership**
- 24 Education**
- 30 Features**
- 32 Industry**
- 36 TDA Update**  
by Lena Wilson, Assistant Commissioner,  
Food and Nutrition, Texas Department of Agriculture

## 2023 TASN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

June 10-13, 2023  
HOUSTON



9

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 8 Meet Your New 2023-2024 TASN Board Members**
- 9 2023 TASN Annual Conference**
- 22 Membership Drive**
- 26 Certification FAQ**
- 32 What Makes a Good Broker or Regional Manufacturer Representative?**  
by Mary Elle Cote, Key Impact Sales, TASN Industry Chair
- 34 2023 PCS Wrap-Up**
- 36 TDA Update: School Nutrition Set to Move Forward after Return to Normal**  
by Lena Wilson, Assistant Commissioner, Food and Nutrition, Texas Department of Agriculture

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## SPRING 2023

Hello TASN members,

Spring break is now in the rearview, and the end of the school year is in sight. I hope you all took some time to relax, recharge, and get ready for the sprint to the finish line. Finish line is probably not the right word as our work is never truly finished.

I attended a couple of events this spring. Our [Partnership Collaboration Summit](#) in Arlington was a success. It was great to reconnect with industry partners and colleagues from around the state. Thank you to those who attended. I think a good time was had by all. If you didn't attend, please consider it next year.



I also had the opportunity to advocate for our students at SNA's [Legislative Conference](#) in Washington, D.C. This event is the highlight of my year. If you have never attended, I highly encourage you to come next year to help us speak with legislators about the great things that are happening in our programs. The conversations at this conference lead directly to good outcomes for our kids.

As you make plans for the rest of your school year, please remember the following events:

[TASN Annual Conference](#) - June 10-13 in Houston, TX

[SNA ANC](#) - July 9-11 in Denver, CO

I am really looking forward to our conference in my hometown of Houston. Our president-elect, Doug Massey, the planning committee, and our headquarters staff have put together a great program. We will have plenty of learning opportunities and one of the most unique Industry Events that we have ever had. The theme is Creating Magic, and I believe we will do so. [Come join us in Houston](#) in June!

I can't wait to see all of you in June. Until then, keep feeding children, love your co-workers, and make somebody's day every day.

**Darin Crawford**

*Cypress-Fairbanks ISD*

*TASN 2022–2023 President*

TASN EVENT CALENDAR		
TASN Annual Conference Regular Registration Deadline	May 15	<a href="#">Register Here</a>
<a href="#">2023 TASN Annual Conference</a>	June 10–13	Houston, Texas
<a href="#">SNA Annual Nutrition Conference (ANC)</a>	July 9–11	Denver, Colorado
2024 TASN Annual Conference	June 30–July 3, 2024	San Antonio, Texas



## HEADQUARTERS HIGHLIGHTS

by Karen J. Andrasi,  
*TASN Executive Director*

Spring is my favorite time of the year. The temperatures are fluctuating, not too hot and not too cold. We are blessed with sunshine and rain, and the flowers and trees are in bloom, with new or strengthened growth. This time of year reminds me of each of us as we navigate through life, ever-changing, and growing, shedding sections of our life to make room for new ideas, adventures, and all that life has to offer.

As with our personal growth, it also brings TASN growth. The pandemic was tumultuous for all of us. We are glad to be recovering and recovering with all of you! Among many things with COVID, the active membership was down, to 4,063 members. Currently, we have 4,700 members and growing. The new [certification program](#) was implemented in July 2022 to simplify the process so that more members could take advantage of the program. At the present time, we have 1,177 active members in the certification program.

TASN offers scholarships and awards each year. The application deadline for this year was February 28, 2023, and we are excited to announce we received 16 scholarship applications and 26 applications for various awards. This is great, and we look forward to honoring the winners at the award ceremony in conjunction with the TASN Annual Conference. Thank you to all that participated. The [awards](#) and [scholarships](#) information is on the TASN website. If you need additional information, please contact Eric Vicharelli at [ericv@tasn.net](mailto:ericv@tasn.net).

Due to the February winter storm, the external auditor was not able to present the 2021-2022 audit at the board meeting. The Executive/Finance Committee met with him via Zoom on March 20, 2023. TASN received a good standing report.

The TASN vision was and is to have representation from around the great state of Texas. We know volunteering is a huge commitment. We appreciate members taking the time to be on the board and help make the decisions for the future of TASN. If anything good came out of COVID, it was that we learned to adapt and be creative with our meetings, time, and ideas. Although being a board member takes time, we have been able to reduce the out-of-office time by scheduling Zooms. We have also been able to combine meetings, creating less time out of the office. TASN is owned and run by its members. What better way to take advantage of your business than to be on the TASN board making decisions?

If you are interested in running for a board position and want to learn more about TASN and the positions available, please contact me at: [karena@tasn.net](mailto:karena@tasn.net) or 512-371-0087 ext. 204. We will be opening the 2024-2025 call for nominations in July and the election will take place in March 2024.

The following positions will be up for election in 2024: Vice President, Membership Chair, Education Chair, Chair of Area Representatives, and Area 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 Representatives.



## Greetings from TASN Vice President Lacy Willey



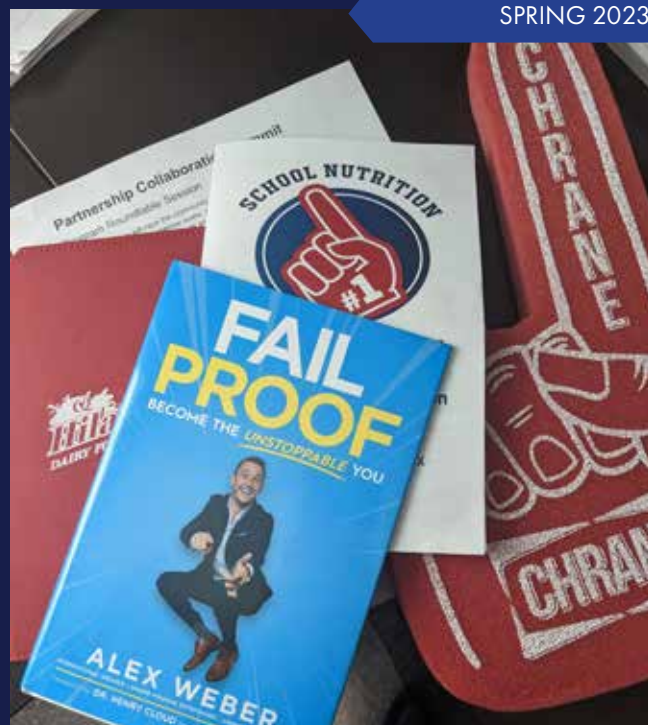
**If you can hear me, say  
WHOOO WHOOP!**

Thank you to all who attended the Partnership Collaboration Summit in Arlington, TX. We had a great time sharing ideas, growing new skills, increasing our emotional intelligence, and building relationships with child nutrition professionals from across the state. You definitely do NOT want to miss out on the great things that get accomplished collaborating with colleagues and industry experts. Mark your calendar NOW for [January 29-31, 2024](#), in Horseshoe Bay, Texas. You will not regret making that one of your priority stops for professional and program development.

Alex Weber was phenomenal as our keynote speaker and session provider. I encourage everyone to connect with him at [imalexweber.com](http://imalexweber.com) and follow him on his [social media](#) platforms. I also want to thank the PCS committee and industry partners who made this such a memorable experience. Committee members included Rebecca Kenefic Austin, Ace Mart Restaurant Supply; Michael Northey, Willis ISD; Andrea Gonzalez, Austin ISD; Lisa Mitchell, Brazosport ISD; and the TASN headquarters crew! Industry sponsorship was provided by Hiland Dairy Foods, Ace Mart Restaurant Supply, Food Design Professionals, SFSPac Food Safety and Sanitation System, Chrane Foodservice Solutions, Cool Tropics, Oak Farms Dairy, and Pasco Brokerage, Inc. Check out the pictures to the right.

TASN kicked off conference season with an awesome summit, and is building its momentum to have an extraordinary time at the Annual Conference in Houston, where we will continue "Creating Magic" for students everywhere. [Register now](#) because you don't want to be left out of an amazing experience.

I hope all of you finish out the school year stronger, smarter, and more motivated to keep feeding our Texas students with good nutrition and great service.



## Greetings from Area 5 Representative Victoria Ybarra, Red Oak ISD



Area 5 Districts were geared up this spring for [National School Breakfast Week](#) March 6–10. Schools participate in this annual event to showcase the importance of a nutritious school breakfast. This year, districts promoted breakfast in creative ways using themes like SNA’s “[Dig In to School Breakfast](#)” and USDA’s “[Get Your Day in Gear with a Healthy School Breakfast](#).” Districts in Area 5 invited

teachers, principals, school administrators, school board members, and even some celebrity guests to help students get excited about breakfast!



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## Greetings from Area 7 Representative Joy Peters, Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD

Spring Break has come and gone, and now many of us are collectively counting the days until the end of the school year. So many exciting things are getting ready to happen. My favorite “holiday” is the first Friday of every May: School Lunch Hero Day. May 5 is School Lunch Hero Day this year and I encourage everyone to use this day to remind your community of the amazing things Lunch Heroes do everyday. I really like to use this day to promote all the hard work the cafeteria staff does each year and remind families of the hidden heroes on campus.

**Here are some great ways to celebrate your campus heroes!**

- Get together with teachers or student

organizations on campus to get students to make cards or posters for the cafeteria staff.

- Post on social media about your staff and all the wonderful meals they are serving.
- Make a meal for your kitchen staff - you might even be able to get campus or district admin to get involved.
- Small gifts for staff are also nice – baked goods, t-shirts, keychains, & coffee cups.
- Deliver cards with words of appreciation.

*“Showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other.”*

— Randy Pausch



# 2023-2024 TASN ELECTION

## MEET YOUR NEWLY ELECTED BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you to everyone who voted in the 2023-2024 TASN election. Meet the TASN members who will be leading your association! They will be installed at the 2023 Annual Conference this June in Houston. Congratulations to all our new board members!



### **Vice President**

Susan D'Amico  
Aldine ISD



### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Christie Lammers  
Texarkana ISD



### **Public Policy & Legislative Chair**

Jennifer Miller  
Garland ISD



### **Area 3 Representative**

Nancy Macias  
Sheldon ISD



### **Area 5 Representative**

Suellen Atteberry  
Garland ISD



### **Area 7 Representative**

Joy Peters  
Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD



# 2023 TASN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## JUNE 10–13, 2023 | HOUSTON

Marriott Marquis Hotel & George R. Brown Convention Center







Join TASN, ISD food service professionals, and industry partners as we come together to shape, build, and support K-12 child nutrition programs in Texas.

2023 TASN Annual Conference sessions will take place in Houston, June 10-13, 2023, at the Marriott Marquis Hotel. The exhibit hall will be located in the George R. Brown Convention Center, which is connected via sky bridge to the hotel.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The TASN Annual Conference is a valuable educational and networking opportunity for all ISD K-12 food service employees, specialist, managers, directors, supervisors, superintendents, stakeholders, and industry partners. Online registration is now open. We hope to see you there!

## WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND?

This four-day event is all about the expansion of the mind! You will experience inspirational keynote speakers and attend sessions designed to generate ideas you can implement in your district. You will also have the opportunity to meet our exhibitors and explore the exhibit hall, network with like-minded professionals, and take some time to have fun.

**JOIN US IN CREATING MAGIC!**  
**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!**

**REGISTER NOW**



# 2023 TASN ANNUAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

## GEORGE R. BROWN CONVENTION CENTER

The George R. Brown Convention Center opened in downtown Houston on September 26, 1987. The world-class convention campus has undergone two major expansions, growing the facility to 1.8 million square feet. Two connected hotels were added along with [Avenida Plaza](#), an outdoor pedestrian-friendly event and leisure space featuring restaurants, retail, and free live entertainment. **Conference Exhibits will be located in Hall B3 of the Convention Center.**



*George R. Brown Convention Center*



*High Dive poolside restaurant at the Marriott Marquis Hotel*

## MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOUSTON HOTEL

Experience the perfect blend of exceptional service, convenience, and modern style year-round at Marriott Marquis Houston Hotel, located in downtown Houston and connected by sky walk to the George R. Brown Convention Center. Satisfy your palate with six onsite dining options. **The Marriott Marquis Houston Hotel will host TASN registration, general sessions, learning sessions, award ceremony, annual meeting, board meeting, and meals.**

**Note:** the Marriott Marquis Hotel TASN block has been filled. Please make reservations at the Hampton Inn Houston Downtown, listed below.

## HAMPTON INN HOUSTON DOWNTOWN

Annual Conference Room Rate: \$179

**RESERVE HOTEL NOW**

Hampton Inn Houston  
710 Crawford Street  
Houston, Texas 77002  
713-224-0011

If you opt to call to make your reservation, make sure to mention you're attending the TASN Annual Conference in order to receive the TASN rate.



# GENERAL SESSIONS



## FIRST GENERAL SESSION

### JON COLBY

#### IMPROVING COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP THROUGH IMPROV

Jon Colby has been empowering people with improv for 20 years. From presenting to performing, his engaging and highly interactive approach has successfully helped various audiences across the United States become better communicators, listeners, co-workers, teammates, salespeople, and even family members. He has motivated and entertained hundreds of clients, including some of the nation's top companies and organizations.



## SECOND GENERAL SESSION

### LENA WILSON

#### TDA UPDATE

Lena Wilson is the Assistant Commissioner for the Food and Nutrition Division at the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). She oversees all activities related to compliance with regulations for the 12 federal nutrition programs administered by the agency. Lena, a registered dietitian, has more than 20 years of experience with federal nutrition programs. She often touts that she is one of the few people who has worked at the state and local level with every U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrition assistance program including the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

## INDUSTRY EVENING EVENT

**JUNE 12, 2023 | 7:00PM | MARRIOTT MARQUIS TEXAS BALLROOM**

This year's Industry Evening Event will be based around the Cirque Du Soleil theme, with various performers from around the country. There will be an interactive reception with delicious food, music, and more. Following the reception, the main show will begin creating a magical experience for the night! To conclude the event, we will be giving away prizes (you must be present to WIN!) It will be a magical night to remember!



Here are just some of the valuable learning sessions and speakers you'll see at the 2023 TASN Annual Conference! Check the TASN website for more to come as we finalize the schedule.

KEY AREA 1: NUTRITION		AUDIENCE
Beyond the Tray: Food and Agriculture Literacy	Nan Cramer	<span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Beyond Averages: Using Simple Statistics to Improve Your Menus	Ralph Wilkins, Katherine Yarbrough	<span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Building Brain Power with School Meals	Heidi Kessler	<span>M</span>
How Dairy and Plants can Boost Participation	Lindsey Schoenfeld	<span>E</span> <span>D</span>
TASN Class (Membership, Certification, PP&L)	John Ceballos, Kasandra Davis, Maggie Kennedy	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
KEY AREA 2: OPERATIONS		AUDIENCE
TDA Food Production	Lorri Livingston, Jocelyn Karbo	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
The D, E ,Fs of a Successful Culinary Nutrition Education Class (Demos, Engagement, Food, Facts and Fundamentals)	Brittany Jones	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Retaining, Growing & Valuing Good Employees	Diana Brown	<span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
A Collaborated Effort for Efficient and Complaint Equipment Procurement	Christie Lammers	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Transitioning Back to Scratch Cooking: Strategies for Optimizing the Kitchen and Labor Force	Richard Mallard	<span>D</span>
The Magic of a Connected Kitchen	Annette Schonhœft, Doug Durrwachter, Lloyd Hartsfield, Pete Terwilliger	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Offer Vs Serve	Thao Vo	<span>E</span>
Sanitation (Spanish)	Diana Brown	<span>E</span>
Food Safety (Spanish)	Diana Brown	<span>E</span>
Equipment Automation	Matthew Cautin	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Industry Panel	Duane Guidry	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Digitize Your Cafeterias: The How and The Why	Lindsey Copeland	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
KEY AREA 3: ADMINISTRATION		AUDIENCE
Advocating for Your School Nutrition Programs	Molly Platts	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Managers	Adam Whitten +ARs	<span>M</span>
Onboarding and the New Hire Experience	Monique Williams	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Leadership - It will Make you or Break you	Steve Lisbony	<span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
KEY AREA 4: MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS		AUDIENCE
Next Level Service	Kern Hall	<span>M</span>
Leadership	Doug Massey, John Ferguson	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Customer Service (Spanish)	Rolando Hernandez	<span>E</span>
Marketing	John Ceballos	<span>M</span>
Team Building with an Empathy-based Lens	Jeannine Rios, Stacie Sanchez Hare	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
The Great Meal Compromise: Using technology to get more meals to More Students	Kim Ziarko	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Employee Retention	Bob Anderson	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
Understand Your Customers and Promote to Them	Malaika Jenkins	<span>E</span> <span>M</span> <span>E</span> <span>D</span>
<span>E</span> Employees/Specialists		<span>M</span> Managers
<span>E</span> Supervisors		<span>D</span> Directors

# CONFERENCE AT A GLANCE

## (TENTATIVE)

### SATURDAY, JUNE 10

SNS Exam	1:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Registration Open	2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Rehearsal - General Session / Awards / Installation	2:30 PM – 4:00 PM
Learning Sessions	3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Board of Directors Dinner	6:30 PM – 8:30 PM

### SUNDAY, JUNE 11

Exhibitors Move in	7:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Registration & Chapter Sales Open	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
First Executive Committee Meeting	9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Annual Meeting / Installation / Award Ceremony (includes lunch)	11:30 AM – 2:30 PM
TDA Food Production	3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Learning Session	3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

### MONDAY, JUNE 12

Registration & Chapter Sales Open	8:00 AM – Noon
General Session – Jon Colby	9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
Learning Sessions	10:45 AM – 1:00 PM
Exhibits Open for Decision Makers	10:45 AM – 1:30 PM
Exhibits Open for All	1:30 PM – 3:30 PM
General Session - Lena Wilson, TDA Update	3:45 PM – 5:00 PM
Industry Evening Event (includes dinner)	7:00 PM – 11:00 PM

### TUESDAY, JUNE 13

Exhibits Open for All	8:30 AM – 1:30 PM
First Board of Directors Meeting	2:00 PM – 3:30 PM



# REGISTRATION FORM

## 2023 TASN Annual Conference

Houston, Texas | June 10-13, 2023

REGISTRATION PAYMENT DEADLINE  
**MAY 15, 2023**

Badges will be assigned per the paid TASN membership category. ID will be required to pick up badges.

Address will be given to exhibitors

### REGISTRATION INFO: (for ISD, TDA, Professional Service Provider, and ESC personnel only)

Name:	Member Number:
School District:	Position:
Summer Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Phone:	Fax:
Email:	
Special Accommodations/Allergies:	

### REGISTRATION FEES (includes all items listed on the same line plus exhibit hall entry)

REGISTRATION TYPE:	CHECK ONE:	REGISTRATION INCLUDES:	CHECK MEALS YOU WILL BE ATTENDING:
TASN Member: Regular Rate (Payment Due May 15)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$335	Learning Sessions    General Sessions    Annual Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Monday Dinner
TASN Member: Onsite Registration (after May 15)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$515	Learning Sessions    General Sessions	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Monday Dinner
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>		

### PAYMENT INFORMATION \*\*Payment must be received by the deadline date to receive that package price\*\*

<input type="checkbox"/> P.O. Number (P.O. paperwork must be attached):	<input type="checkbox"/> Check Number:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Card Number:	<input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MC <input type="checkbox"/> DISCOVER <input type="checkbox"/> AMEX		
Name on Card:	Exp. Date:	CVV Code:	Billing Zip:
Billing Address:			

**Liability & Indemnification Agreement:** Each form must be signed before registration can be processed. I the undersigned, am employed in the child nutrition profession in conjunction with K-12 schools. I request that you accept me as a participant at the 2023 TASN Annual Conference in Houston, TX, June 10-13, 2023, and I understand there is some inherent risk in traveling to and from and as a result of attending the conference. The undersigned hereby releases TASN and the committees, members, officers, employees, and directors from all liability for sickness, injury, death, and property damage that may be suffered in connection with such activities, whether due to negligence or otherwise, accepting such risks involved and waiving all rights of any kind that may otherwise arise. The undersigned agrees to indemnify TASN, its committees, members, officers, employees, and directors against all judgments obtained and against the cost of defense of such claims, including reasonable attorney's fees. Photo Release: I grant TASN, its representatives and employees, the right to take photographs of me and my property. I authorize TASN to copyright, use, and publish the same in print and/or electronically. I agree that TASN may use such photographs of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, social networking, and web content. My registration application information will also be published for exhibitors using lead retrieval. No badge changes will be made onsite. **All cancellations must be received in writing no later than May 1, 2023. TASN will assess a \$50.00 administrative fee on all cancellations. No refunds will be made after May 1, 2023.**

### REQUIRED

Signature/Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your completed registration form with either your purchase order form or full payment.

If using a purchase order, payment is due by May 15, 2023 to receive the regular rate.

#### MAIL TO:

TASN Headquarters  
5910 Courtyard Drive Ste #230, Austin, TX 78731  
OR FAX TO: (512) 371-0125

**NOTE:** TASN will not accept any registrations in the office after **MAY 15, 2023**. We will have onsite registration forms at the onsite registration counter at the conference. **INCOMPLETE FORMS WILL BE RETURNED WITH PAYMENT.**



# CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS

**HELLO TASN FAMILY!** TASN headquarters is working hard to put on the best show for you at the 2023 TASN Annual Conference, hosted in Houston. We look forward to seeing all of you again! As we book speakers and create schedules, we would like to reach out to all our members to ask for volunteers. Volunteering is such a great way to get involved and be a part of the conference, not to mention how your time and effort assist in making the conference go as smoothly as possible.

TASN would also like to take this time to thank last year's volunteers! Huge shout-out to the following members:

**Sandra Baxter**  
*Bryan ISD*

**Tina Brooks**  
*Stratford ISD*

**Vanessa Jimenez**  
*Uplift Education*

**Vicky Clark**  
*Santa Fe ISD*

**Christie Lammers**  
*Texarkana ISD*

**Joy Peters**  
*Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD*

**Norma Riojas**  
*Eagle Mtn-Saginaw ISD*

**Ashley Robbins**  
*North East ISD*

**Yolanda Rodriguez**  
*Klein ISD*

**Taylor Thompson**  
*North East ISD*

**Veronica Villarreal**  
*East Central ISD*

**Adam Whitten**  
*White Settlement ISD*

**Victoria Ybarra**  
*Red Oak ISD*

**Eleazar Zuniga**  
*Uplift Education*

We are looking for volunteers for different days and times at the conference. View the Volunteer & Moderator form on the next page. If you have questions, feel free to call or [email](#) me.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Warm regards,  
**[Eric Vicharelli](#)**

TASN Education & Training Specialist  
5910 Courtyard Drive #230  
Austin, Texas 78731  
512.371.0087 ext. 207

## Here is what some of our volunteers had to say:

"I enjoyed volunteering for TASN at the conference and would encourage others to as well. My task was easy, fun and allowed me to meet interesting people! Everything I needed to complete my assignment was ready for me, all I had to do was show up and introduce my speakers. I encourage anyone to volunteer. It's rewarding, easy and provides numerous networking opportunities."

**CHRISTIE LAMMERS**

"This was my third year volunteering at conference. Overall, I have found the experience to be pleasant. Volunteering allows me to meet other TASN members, enjoy classes I may not have planned to take, and see a different picture of how conference works."

**ADAM WHITTEN**

"Every time there is an opportunity, I like to volunteer. I would like to volunteer this coming year, I will look out for the 2023 form."

**YOLANDA RODRIGUEZ**

"This was my first time volunteering at conference. I truly enjoyed helping in all the different areas I was assigned, like at General Session during voting and filming the bilingual video promoting TASN. We had so much fun talking to people and listening to their stories of why they came to conference. I was happy to help. It gave me the opportunity to meet lots of people."

**NORMA RIOJAS**



## Volunteer and Moderator

Request Form

2023 TASN Annual Conference

Phone: 512-371-0087 ext. 207 / Fax: 512-371-0125

Email: ericv@tasn.net

**Volunteers/Moderators help make every TASN Conference a success.**

**Please complete the form below and return to TASN Headquarters.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name and Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Note:** To volunteer or moderate, you must be registered for the 2023 TASN Annual Conference. Although we value and appreciate our volunteers and moderators, TASN is unable to reimburse volunteers and moderators for travel and/or conference expenses.

### **Volunteer Availability:**

Please place an "X" by the times you are available, there are multiple shifts that volunteers and moderators can fill:

### **Saturday, June 10, 2023**

\_\_\_\_\_ 2:00pm – 5:00pm

### **Sunday, June 11, 2023**

\_\_\_\_\_ 11:00am – 1:00pm \_\_\_\_\_ 1:00pm – 3:00pm \_\_\_\_\_ 3:00pm – 5:00pm

### **Monday, June 12, 2023**

\_\_\_\_\_ 8:30am – 10:30am \_\_\_\_\_ 10:30am – 12:30pm \_\_\_\_\_ 3:30pm – 5:00pm

### **LIABILITY & INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT:**

Each form must be signed before registration can be processed. I request that you accept me as a participant at the 2023 TASN Annual Conference to be held in Houston, TX, June 10 -13, 2023. I understand there is some risk inherent in traveling to and from and as a result of attending the conference. The undersigned hereby releases TASN and the committees, members, officers, employees, and directors from all liability for injury, death and property damage that may be suffered in connection with such activities, whether due to negligence; otherwise, accepting such risks involved and waiving all rights of any kind that might otherwise arise. The undersigned agrees to indemnify TASN, its committees, members, officers, employees, and directors against all judgments obtained and against the cost of defense of such claims, including reasonable attorney's fees. TASN HQ is located at 5910 Courtyard Drive #230, Austin, TX 78731.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter Flag Release Form

Chapter Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

School District: \_\_\_\_\_

Flag Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this form, I understand there is a \$25.00 fee for not picking up my flag. (This fee is to cover the cost of mailing the flag back to your chapter).

Note:

- There will be a sign out sheet to retrieve your flag at registration.
- You are not allowed to remove your flag from the flagpole, TASN has hired people that will handle this.
- You may pick your flag up at the registration desk at 5:00 PM Monday, June 12, 2023

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send flags to TASN Headquarters by May 15<sup>th</sup>**

Texas Association for School Nutrition  
5910 Courtyard Drive, Suite 230  
Austin, TX 78731



# Chapter News

## Area 3

### Aldine ASN

We had multiple fundraisers in January, February, and March. In March, we successfully sold Deanan Gourmet Popcorn across our schools. Our customers loved the vanilla and caramel flavors. In February, we sold Valentine's Day red T-shirts to our child nutrition staff. It was such a popular item that we had to order another batch of shirts. Our most exciting general meeting of the year was our

Zumba fundraiser. Our members heard Latin and international music and danced a dynamic calorie-burning workout. We look forward to attending the [TASN Annual Conference](#) in Houston this summer.

Click below to connect with us!



### Cypress-Fairbanks ASN

**Happy spring, everyone!** After a crazy fall semester that involved TASN classes, T-shirt sales, and a big Christmas party, we are ready for some warmer weather. This has been another year filled with busy days feeding students. We have been lucky to have some really great meetings and classes with our amazing nutrition staff! We enjoyed celebrating Christmas in style at our favorite place, and our February meeting at our production center was a

success! This spring we had our annual appreciation picnic where we served hot dogs to our hard working staff, and we will host more classes as we continue to raise money for this summer's conference. We look forward to seeing you all there!!

Click below to connect with us!



# Chapter News

## Area 6

### Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ASN

#### Empowering Zero Waste

#### Diverting 100% polystyrene (foam) trays away from landfill and into Next Life Cycle....

Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD has chosen to try a new system for eliminating trash issues. Our pilot program is at Creekview Middle School, with the enrollment of 845 students. We will reduce waste in the trash by approximately 50%. If we have three bags of trash a day over an eight-week period, that can add up to 120-150 bags filled with stacked foam trays. With our new StyroGenie machine, we have 26 foam blocks on one pallet after 8 weeks. The goal is to be good stewards of the earth, while also saving money. Typically, a school can save between \$4,000 and \$7,000 per year on reduced trash.



its magic, creating three-inch waste blocks. It can densify up to 1,800 trays in seven to ten hours. Through conductive heat, the StyroGenie melts the trays into plastic blocks, thus reducing the volume of Styrofoam waste collection by 95%. The district saves two pallets from the delivery of food from our distributor.

The trays are then placed on this pallet to be shipped to the U.S. processing partner; this is where the blocks are converted back into the oil resource from which they were originally produced.



Our district's initiative to reduce and recover our soiled form foodservice waste directly contributes to the 100% landfill diversion and to the preservation of our planet's natural resources! Plus, the machine is made in America!



The StyroGenie is working well for us. After our students eat their lunches, they take their trays over to the garbage and tap the excess food off into the trash can, then stack them into a tray stacker. When the tray stacker is full, the custodian places the trays into the StyroGenie. The StyroGenie then does



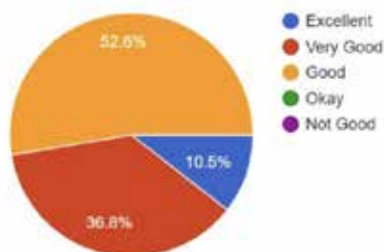


## District News

### School Meals Rock at Dallas ISD Administration Building!

School meals have changed with time. To parents, it might look like the same pizza, the same sandwich, the same chicken tenders, but the foods have changed. Today's school meals are healthier than ever before. Modern school meals, as served in Dallas ISD, feature lean proteins, abundant fruits and vegetables, are lower in sodium and fats than even five years ago, and feature healthy whole grains.

New for 2023, at Café 9400 in the Linus D. Wright Administrative Building, Dallas ISD Food and Child Nutrition Services is providing free samples of food currently being served in cafeterias across the district. The Café 9400 will provide free samples of school foods, every Friday during lunch time, until the end of the current school year.



surprised at the taste and quality of school food. Many expressed their excitement for school food

Dallas ISD employees at the Linus D. Wright Administrative Building were pleasantly

by adding that they would like to see the same recipes at Café 9400 for staff. Lissy from the Benefits Department, after trying the Cheesy Taco Pasta sample, mentioned, "It's comfort food and is actually really tasty, I am sure the students love it." Mike from the Fire Protection Department stated, "Students would like this if they actually try it, this is really good."

Dallas ISD staff sampled the cheesy taco pasta recipe. In addition to the comments provided above, many employees also completed a survey. (See graph)

While nobody likes every single food they taste for the first time, the results were quite positive, and indicated that the cheesy taco pasta is not the same school food which many people remember from back when they were in school.

Food and Child Nutrition Services Executive Director, Michael Rosenberger, said, "We would like to spread the word about our new and delicious recipes with the staff and parents." Mr. Rosenberger added, "We are working hard to bring students new concepts, homemade recipes, and tasty food that remind them of home."





# TASN MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

September 1 - May 31

## How it works:

- For every three (3) people you recruit to be members, your name will be entered into a drawing that will take place on TASN Facebook Live.

## Prizes:

- \$100.00 cash prize, free membership for the next year, and recognition at the 2023 TASN Annual Conference.

## Rules:

- Must be a new member or a person that has had inactive member status with TASN for two (2) or more years.
- Must include email address to be eligible.
- Must use membership drive form, located in this issue and on the TASN website.
- Recruiter must be a Specialist, Manager, or Supervisor.
- Recruit at least three (3) members to be eligible.
- Membership application form must be completed and postmarked by May 31, 2023.

# TASN Membership Application Form

Please check one of the following: New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Member Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Information:**

Member #: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print and complete information on this form. TASN will use this address for all correspondence.) Only completed forms will be processed.

**Name**

Last: \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_ M.I.: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt/Ste. #: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

ISD: \_\_\_\_\_ Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Position:	Category:	Individual:
Cooks, bakers, bookkeepers, technicians, assistants, equipment/maintenance specialists	Employee	\$23.00
Managers, head cooks, assistant managers, accounting dept., equipment/maintenance	Manager	\$28.00
<b>Please circle or check one:</b>	Director or Supervisor	\$43.00
Working in the foodservice program at the school district level, equipment/maintenance	TDA, ESC, TDH	\$43.00
Working in the state office for child nutrition programs, including nutrition education	Retired	\$18.00
Retired school foodservice workers	Students	\$13.00
Full-time students enrolled in college or university in the foodservice, nutrition, or dietary program	Affiliate	\$18.00
Persons involved in non-foodservice administrative duties of a school district, college/university in Texas, or an allied non-profit organization		

If recruiting during TASN's year-long membership drive period, please fill out the following. **September 1st - May 31st**

**Membership Drive Requirements:**

- Must be a new member or a person with an inactive member status with TASN for two (2) or more years
- Must include email address
- Must use this membership drive form
- Recruiter must be a specialist, manager, or supervisor
- Recruit at least three (3) members for one (1) entry

**Prizes: \$100.00 gift card, Free TASN membership for recruiter, and recognition at the TASN Annual Conference.**

*Recruitment must be postmarked within membership drive dates.*

**Recruiter's Information:**

Recruiter's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Recruiter Member #: \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter's Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Recruiter's ISD: \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Information:**

Credit Card type: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return payment and application form to:** TASN, 5910 Courtyard Drive, Suite #230, Austin, Texas 78731  
or by Fax: (512) 371-0125

Do you make purchasing decisions for your district? ☐ Yes ☐ No Is your salary paid by a management company? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Member (ISD, TDA, ESC, TDH) Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Education Update

by Kasandra Davis, MS, RD, LD, TASN Education Chair



**Spring is here** and there is buzz around spring cleaning, new projects and summer plans! While these are all fun and exciting, let us also use this time to self-reflect and remove doubt, worry, regret, and negative emotions holding us back! What is a goal you wish

to accomplish in your professional life? What steps can you do to ensure it happens? How can TASN help?



With over **20,000** school jobs done, you can trust that **Ace Mart** is ready to help provide your staff with **quality equipment** and students with a healthy lifestyle!

## EASY ORDERING PROCESS



### PREPARATION

Our School Contract Specialist will gather an understanding of your operation so we can take the proper steps to begin your order. We'll go over contracts, regulations, and more.



### QUOTING

Next, we'll build a competitive quote based on your shopping list and budget. We'll also suggest substitute items with your approval to help source the right solutions.



### APPROVAL

When you approve a final quote, we'll send the order to our warehouse and vendors if needed. We'll then set a delivery date that works for your plan and keep contact until the order is delivered.



### DELIVERY

If requested, we'll have staff on-site to help check-in items and conduct a follow-up site survey so delivery goes smooth. Afterwards, we'll follow-up and address any additional needs.

Did you know that the Education Committee oversees the [Certification Program](#), [Administrative and Manager Academies](#), [scholarships](#), and [awards](#), and participates in the [TASN Annual Conference](#) planning committee? The [TASN website](#) offers additional information for all of these categories to help you in your career.

The new TASN Certification Program went into effect on July 1, 2022. The program now aligns with the four key areas required for USDA Professional Standards and follows a one-year renewal cycle with randomized audits. Another change worth mentioning is that all Education Service Center (ESC) classes taken from July 2021 to present are pre-approved, valid, and count towards any certification. Many Texas school districts have chosen the TASN Certification Program as a basis for job placement, advancement, and pay increases. If you have ever been interested in a TASN certification, it's now easier than ever.

I look forward to meeting and connecting with many of you across the state to learn and grow with one another. I hope you have an amazing spring semester and utilize TASN to support you in your goals.

Check out these online, on-demand courses available to TASN members!

LEARN MORE

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# CERTIFICATION INFORMATION **FAQ**

Below are answers to some of the most common questions we get for TASN Certifications.  
Additional questions can be sent to Eric Vicharelli at [ericv@tasn.net](mailto:ericv@tasn.net).

**Q** What are the requirements per level?

**A** Levels 2-5 have a similar structure in requirements while Level 1 has specific requirements.

Levels	Requirements		Total
1	4 Hours of Food Safety 4 Hours of Sanitation 4 Hours of Customer Service	4 Hours of Recognizing Reimbursable Meals/ Meal Patterns	16 Hours
2	Key Area 1 – 10 Hours Key Area 2 – 10 Hours	Key Area 3 – 10 Hours Key Area 4 – 10 Hours	40 Hours
3	Key Area 1 – 10 Hours Key Area 2 – 10 Hours Key Area 3 – 10 Hours	Key Area 4 – 10 Hours Key Area General – 10 Hours	50 Hours
4	Key Area 1 – 12 Hours Key Area 2 – 12 Hours Key Area 3 – 12 Hours	Key Area 4 – 12 Hours Key Area General – 12 Hours	60 Hours
5	Key Area 1 – 15 Hours Key Area 2 – 15 Hours Key Area 3 – 15 Hours	Key Area 4 – 15 Hours Key Area General – 15 Hours	75 Hours

**Q** What are Key Areas?

**A** There are four Key Areas and each represent a main topic amongst all USDA Professional Standard Codes (USDA PS Codes). TASN uses USDA PS Codes to ensure that proper materials and topics are being taught and learned. The first number on any USDA PS Code will represent the Key Area.

\*It is important to note that Key Area does not equal TASN level.

Hours of Instruction: 1  
SNA Key Area(s): 4  
USDA Professional Standard Code(s): 4000

Because the USDA PS Code 4000 begins with the number 4, that makes this certificate valid for Key Area 4.

Hours of Instruction: 1

SNA Key Area(s): 2/3

USDA Professional Standard Code(s): 2000, 2100, 3000, 3300

This certificate counts towards Key Area 2 OR Key Area 3. It can be used towards a single Key Area but not towards both, meaning it cannot count as one hour in Key Area 2 and one hour in Key Area 3.

**Q** Why do I have to start over at Level 1?

**A** It is unfortunate, but there are situations that will make a certification become void and cause a member to start over at Level 1.

These situations include:

- Certification expires beyond the 90-day grace period
- Membership expires beyond the 30-day grace period

02/14/2023

CERTIFICATION DATE

RE-CERTIFICATION DATE

02/14/2024

EXPIRATION DATE

This section is located at the bottom left of all certification cards. All certificates are given a 90-day grace period to renew or upgrade. In this example the expiration date is 02/14/2024 making the end of the 90-day grace period be 05/14/2024. Once the 90-day grace period ends the certificate becomes void causing the member to start over at Level 1.

Member Number: #####

Position


ISD

Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip Code

Expiration Date: 2/14/2024



The membership card is located at the bottom right of all membership receipts. All memberships are given a 30-day grace period to renew. In this example the expiration date is 02/14/2024 making the end of the 30-day grace period be 03/14/2024. Once the 30-day grace period ends any certification attached to the membership will become void causing the member to start over at Level 1.

continued on next page



**Q** How can I submit my application?

**A** We have various ways to submit paperwork to our office. If you are paying with a check or money order you will have to mail in your complete application, requirements, and payment to:

5910 Courtyard Drive #230  
Austin, TX 79731

If you are paying with a debit or credit card you may fax your application to (512)371-0125.

Each application will have the most current information on how to submit paperwork to our office as well. Keep in mind that TASN staff are not allowed to accept payment via email or phone.

As always, please reach out to [Eric Vicharelli](#) with any questions.

# MANAGERS ACADEMY DATES ANNOUNCED

Registration is now open for this summer's Managers Academy.  
The Academy is being offered at three locations:

Klein ISD | July 10-13, 2023  
Red Oak ISD | July 17-20, 2023  
Texarkana ISD | July 24-27, 2023

The registration deadline is May 31, 2023.

Please contact [Eric Vicharelli](#) with any questions you may have.

Click [here](#) to learn more, or apply now using the form on the next page!

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**Melissa Moore, CEO**  
Houston/Austin/San Antonio  
281-350-2323

**Lance Brooks, President**  
Dallas/Oklahoma  
972-245-5300



**TASN 2023 Summer Managers Academy  
Registration Form**

*You must attach a letter of recommendation with your form.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Member #: \_\_\_\_\_

District: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Number to Reach You: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**I will be attending:**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>July 10 – July 13, 2023</b> Host: <b>Klein ISD</b> 7500 FM 2920 Spring, Tx 77379	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>July 17 – July 20, 2023</b> Host: <b>Red Oak ISD</b> 109 W. Red Oak Rd. Red Oak, Tx 75154	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>July 24 – July 27, 2023</b> Host: <b>Texarkana ISD</b> 1600 Waterall St Texarkana, Tx, 75503
---	--	---

**Registration Deadline: May 31, 2023**

Registration Information: Fee: \$420.00 per student

\*A minimum of 20 attendees must be registered (maximum 35 attendees)

\*You must be a current TASN member

MAIL: Registration form and check or Purchase Order to:  
 Texas Association for School Nutrition  
 5910 Courtyard Drive # 230  
 Austin, TX 78731

FAX: Registration form with credit card info to: (512) 371-0125

LIABILITY & INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT: Each form must be signed before registration can be processed. I request that you accept me as a participant at the TASN 2023 Summer Managers Academy, based on the selection selected above, that will be held at either Klein Food Service 7500 FM 2920, Spring, Tx 77379 or Red Oak ISD ESC 109 W. Red Oak Rd, Red Oak, TX 75154. I understand there is some risk inherent in traveling to and from and as a result of attending the academy. The undersigned hereby releases TASN and the committees, members, officers, employees and directors from all liability for injury, death and property damage that may be suffered in connection with such activities, whether due to negligence or otherwise, accepting such risks involved and waiving all rights of any kind that might otherwise arise. The undersigned agrees to indemnify TASN, its committees, members, officers, employees and directors against all judgments obtained and against the cost of defense of such claims, including reasonable attorney's fees.

PHOTO RELEASE: I grant TASN, its representatives, and employees the right to take photographs of me and my property. I authorize TASN to copyright, use and publish the same in print and/or electronically. I agree that TASN may use such photographs of me with or without my name and for any lawful purpose, including such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, social networking, and web content.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Information:**

Discover \_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_ Amex \_\_\_ Credit Card or Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOOL GARDENS

Nutrition Education: School Gardens  
Gladys Puga -

University of Texas Medical Branch,  
Master of Science & Dietetic Internship Student  
for Cleveland ISD



## About School Gardens

### PUBLIC HEALTH

Promoting and implementing school gardens teaches students how to use a garden as a tool to improve their health and well-being physically and mentally through better nutrition and regular exercise in a natural setting. School gardens offer hands-on experiential learning resulting in gaining nutrition education and public health curricula.

School gardens also tend to leave an impactful guide to students to eat more vegetables and fruits. Students are more willing to try new foods and maintain a healthy body weight over time (Savoie-Roskos et al., 2017). A strategy to prevent and reduce overweight and obesity among children and adolescents is by enhancing food literacy, which is learning nutrition essentials, growing/preparing fresh foods, safe handling/storage, and consistent access to food.

Access to healthy foods is limited in various school districts in Texas. This implies that we are the advocates for students' health. We want to leave a positive impact on availability, access, and consumption of the fresh produce.

Most common educational learnings that school gardens cover is science, food, nutrition, and using a formal or tailored garden curriculum (Burt et al., 2017). Schools are recognized as excellent platforms for promoting lifelong eating habit and improving long-term, sustainable nutrition security.



## Benefits

- Diversifies diets by conducting taste tests and cooking demonstrations
- Fights hunger and malnutrition
- Gives students space for imagination
- Students will grow into behaviors overtime of pro-environmental stewards
- Helps aid in menu planning

### Plan

- **SUPPORTS SUSTAINABILITY AND LONGEVITY FOR EDUCATIONAL GARDENS**

### Grow

- **USING CURRENT INDUSTRY RESEARCH**

### Harvest

- **PROMOTES WORKING TOGETHER**

### Connect

- **HELPS INCREASING AWARENESS**



## Worthwhile Investment

### USDA - FOOD WASTE REDUCTION THROUGH FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS

This program helps schools incorporate local foods into meal programs and supports local foods and agriculture education. Farm to school participation associate with lowering percentages of waste for calories in the School Breakfast Program and improving participation in the National School Lunch Program.

[LINK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)

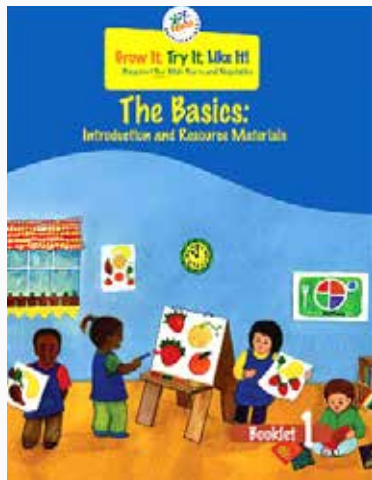
## Square Meals

### TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

#### Garden-Based Learning

This innovative learning provides memorable lessons about fruits and vegetables that may be unfamiliar to them. It creates connections to kids to Texas Agriculture such as Cleveland ISD being TDA recognized by participating in the Farm Fresh Challenge of serving local foods in 2022.

[LINK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



### Grow It, Try It, Like It

A great resource material to emphasize planting activities for children. They are able to touch, smell, feel, and taste new fruits and vegetables

[LINK FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)



BRINGING LIFE TO  
SCHOOLS AND  
SCHOOLS TO LIFE



Click here to view resources

# INDUSTRY UPDATE

By Mary Elle Cote  
Key Impact Sales



I needed help writing this article, and who better to help me than my customers? The simple question I posed was:

## What makes a good broker or regional manufacturer rep?

I was surprised by the variety of answers I received. They really made me pause and think about my own job as a food broker. I love my job and especially my customers, and I want to do better. These are some hints on how to do it. Thank y'all for your help. Here are some snippets from the responses.

"What makes a good broker or regional manufacturer rep is someone who is available when you need them, checks up on the district whether using a coop or not, goes the extra mile to show products, and makes the district feel supported and valued."

Kaisha Martelly Molinar, RDN, LD  
Assistant Director of Planning  
Lamar CISD Child Nutrition

"I feel like a good rep knows their products, provides customer with updated paperwork, and routinely checks on their customers for feedback about products they are using."

Lena Neugebauer  
Child Nutrition Director  
Montgomery ISD

"First would be the ability to establish a relationship with the customer. This helps to be able to know what their needs are or suggest to the customer what their needs may be.

Second, knowing the customer's account balances and giving reminders or suggestions on how to draw down their pounds ie: recipes, etc."

Kelley Terry  
Child Nutrition Director  
Madisonville ISD

"A good rep is:

One that maintains regular personal contact who develops a relationship with the client districts.

One that is responsive to needs and concerns and

One who gets to know our operation so that support from the rep is tailored to who we are and what we need. Not all districts are the same so not all services and support needed are the same."

Sandra Baxter, MS, RD, LD  
Assistant Director, School Nutrition Services  
Bryan ISD

"I would like to see brokers include the lines they broker in periodic emails. There's nothing more frustrating than wondering who I contact for a particular product.

Manufacturers switch brokers, lines change, and brokers switch places. There is a lot to keep up with, so having that info as updated as possible and at our fingertips is definitely helpful and can save time if a situation arises."

Kevin E. White M.S., R.D.  
Assistant Director of Child Nutrition  
Tomball ISD

"I appreciate a broker/rep who makes an appointment and they bring the nutrition labels for the items they are showing me as well as knowing the estimated cost of the item....If I don't know the estimated cost, I can't even make a decision about whether to pursue that product or not."

Cherie Bowers  
Director of Nutrition Services  
Santa Fe ISD

"Listening and communication are also vitally important with a broker on a personal level. I have some brokers that remember my son's name and ask how he is doing, just as I can recall their information. A personal connection is very important, as it builds trust between the client and broker. I even have a special broker that hand paints Christmas spoons that stay up in my office year round. That's the icing on the cake :) "

Sarah Dluhos, RD, LD  
Child Nutrition Coordinator  
College Station ISD

Building relationships and communication with customers is key to successful sales. The relationships should include scheduled sales meetings, proper preparation for calls with well labeled samples, knowledge of product availability, general specification information such as meal components, and a positive smiling face. Timely follow up on requested information or samples would be the icing on the cake.

Kelly Fair, RD  
Coordinator of Business Support Services  
Klein ISD Nutrition & Food Services

As a director, the relationships built between broker and manufacturer representatives are very important. In the K-12 food industry our products are constantly being reformulated, new products added and some discontinued. As we know, menu planning is hard as the trends of food change, student acceptability and availability of products is a great concern. Representatives keep us posted on the new items, trends and changes as our day to day job as directors is not just about food. I would say about 15% of a director's day is focused on food items, prep and serving and the rest is spent on staffing and various other duties. Communication regarding food products is vital to districts.

Relationships built between representatives, districts, and directors allow a voice to be heard at the state and national levels regarding concerns of the meal patterns. Without the teamwork of the broker, manufacturer representatives, and district directors, the K-12 industry would not have been heard over the past few years. It is imperative to keep the doors open regarding the everchanging market of food.

I am grateful for the relationships built, knowledge shared and the continued efforts made by all manufacturers and representatives to ensure students receive quality products that they are willing to consume. A hungry child will not learn, and they are the future.

Debbie Needham  
Child Nutrition Director  
New Caney ISD

"There are some key traits that make an excellent rep, such as: they are knowledgeable about their products, understand their customer's needs and challenges, communicate well, and listen well. Follow-up to questions, requests, and product complaints, is also essential to being a good rep that builds strong relationships. Reps who go above and beyond build relationships and rapport with their customers in a meaningful way."

Jennifer Fasano, M.S., R.D.N., L.D.  
Nutrition Coordinator  
Office of Child Nutrition  
Spring ISD





## 2023 PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATION SUMMIT (PCS)

The 2023 Partnership Collaboration Summit was held in February at the Live! by Loews in Arlington. TASN's first-ever Arlington event was a success! Everyone enjoyed the general sessions featuring Alex Weber and TDA's Lena Wilson, leadership insights, and the opportunity to network with like-minded professionals.



We also had opportunities for fun, especially during our Wednesday reception where we held our biggest Sports Fan Contest! Check out our winners below!



### BIGGEST SPORTS FAN WINNERS



#### First Place

Mary Ellen Cote of Key  
Impact



#### Second Place

Dr. Jessiica Howell of  
YES Prep Public Schools, Inc



#### Third Place

Copperas Cove ISD Cowboys fans (L to R) Lorrie Hornaday, Leslie Fraser, Melissa Bryan, & Amy Santagate

TASN's strength as an association is due in large part to the relationships built between our ISD and industry members, and we thank everyone who attended for supporting this effort by spending time with us in Arlington.

**We hope we see you at the 2024 PCS:  
January 29-31, 2024 in Horseshoe Bay!**



## THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 PCS SPONSORS!

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# School Nutrition Set to Move Forward after Return to Normal

By Lena Wilson

Assistant Commissioner for Food and Nutrition  
Texas Department of Agriculture



The final bell will soon ring for the back-to-normal year for school nutrition. Child Nutrition operators once again shined despite universal challenges like product availability and staffing

shortages. The 2023-2024 school year should bring a true normal and new opportunities to provide nutritious meals to students.

Recently, the [U.S. Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#) outlined its vision for the near future in a proposed rule - [Child Nutrition Programs - Revisions to Nutrition Standards](#)

[Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). The rule satisfies USDA's requirement to align school meals with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The most impactful changes include reducing added sugars in school meals and continuing the reduction of sodium.

The [Texas Department of Agriculture \(TDA\)](#) provided feedback on the proposed rule with the Texas perspective. In the coming months, USDA will review all the comments and use them to develop a final rule. USDA expects to have the rule finalized in time for the 2024-2025 school year, with new limits on sodium and high-sugar products to begin the fall of



2025. Additional limitations on sugar and sodium would then be phased in over the next four years.

When USDA releases the final rule, TDA will update its guidance and work with [Education Service Centers \(ESCs\)](#) to communicate changes to schools. TDA and the ESCs are currently working to provide assistance with changes such as the Summer Meal Programs final rule, which updated summer program regulations to include new performance standards, application requirements, and meal service and monitoring flexibilities.

Whether it is the roll out of a final rule or a new effort to maximize resources like USDA Foods, preparation and training are the keys to successfully navigating changes. Attend TDA's [MegaCon](#) 2023, May 9-11, 2023, and the Texas Association for School Nutrition [Annual Conference](#) this summer.

Participate in [TDA's school webinars](#) every month. Most importantly, reach out to regional representatives at the [ESCs](#) and tap into their expertise.

I am so proud of the tenacity and determination shown by school nutrition teams during a year that began with many unknowns and will end with a sense of accomplishment. School nutrition thrives on moving forward just like the students that come through the cafeteria every day. Despite all the challenges of recent years, school nutrition teams continue to find new ways to encourage children to enjoy healthy school meals. Congratulations on a great year and I look forward to seeing the many successes of the 2023-2024 school year.

## Index of Advertisers

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Page 24

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Page 28

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Dominos

Outside Back Cover

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Hiland Dairy

Page 6

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SFSPac

Index

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Tasty Brands

Page 25

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# April is *National Humor Month*

**Q: How much do pirates pay for earrings?**

**A: A buccaneer!**

OK, OK, so puns *may* be considered the lowest form of humor, but anything that gets you laughing can also have health benefits! Laughing can reduce blood pressure, increase oxygen in your lungs and heart, boost your immune system, help you lose weight by reducing the stress hormone cortisol, and even help prevent heart attacks! So don't be afraid to incorporate a little humor in your day. Your heart will thank you!







# BALANCE WEEKLY SODIUM WHILE RAISING PARTICIPATION.

Domino's Smart Slice contains less sodium per slice compared to similar school lunch items.

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